

# The Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery (FoSOC)



Robert Chipperfield  
1817 - 1911

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The Friends of the Southampton Old Cemetery'

Is a group of enthusiasts interested in the history, wildlife and maintenance of the Old Cemetery in Southampton, Hampshire UK – a Grade II\* listed cemetery.

FoSOC was founded in 2003 by John Avery, Veronica Tippetts and Geoff Watts and has two major aims:

To uphold the original purpose of the Cemetery, which is to be a place of reflection and remembrance of the people buried there.

To support the ecological aims of the adjoining Southampton Common (a Site of Special Scientific Interest), and to treat it with the same care.

**[www.fosoc.org](http://www.fosoc.org)**



## **Robert William Chipperfield**

by Gillie Blake, researched by Bernard Lavell (2006)

Robert William Chipperfield

Born in London 1817 - died in Southampton, 1911, buried in the Old Cemetery.

Robert Chipperfield was a London pharmacist, who moved to Southampton in 1842. He continued at his trade until 1879 when he retired to further his artistic interests.

He joined Southampton Art Society in 1897 and continued as a member for 11 years until 1908. During his time with the society Chipperfield purchased works from his colleagues, and these became part of his bequest to the city upon his death in 1911. The handsome bequest consisted of 170 paintings, provision for the building of a art school, an art gallery and the establishment of a trust fund to purchase works of art for Southampton. His will clearly states the provision for visual arts in our city.

"My fervent desire is, and my executors aim shall be, the furtherance and encouragement of art, in the town of my adoption; Southampton, By renting a suitable room for the exhibition of pictures, engravings, sculpture and by the purchase from time to time of such as the annual income will permit , and also establish a Southampton School of Art, which shall be worthy of the name"

During his lifetime Robert Chipperfield had purchased those pictures he liked and were of popular Victorian taste. Although many of the paintings from the original bequest have been criticised as 'of too little artistic merit to appear on the gallery walls' this may be due to changing fashion more than merit, certainly the renewed interest in Victorian art has seen some of the pictures on display more often than during the last decade of the 20th century.

Without the foresight of Robert Chipperfield it is unlikely that Southampton would have, so quickly, achieved its splendid Art Gallery or the varied art collection that we enjoy today. Let us hope that in 2011 the city shows some recognition of the importance of the man and his bequest to our city.



Robert Chipperfield  
1817 - 1911

*Southampton Sotonians and friends*